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Jun. 25, 2013

When Oakland, California rapper Brondon "Thudda Boy" McDaniel decided on his own last year to commit tax fraud, using a scheme he and two others devised a year earlier, he didn't realize the decision would result in his death, a prosecutor said Monday.

McDaniel, 30, was shot at 12 times and hit at least four times as he stood in front of his house in Oakland. One of the two shooters was a man he worked with a year earlier in a tax fraud scheme that made them money by filing false tax returns, deputy district attorney Matt Foley said.

That man, Ezell Edwards, 24, and Anthony Hoskins, 31, are each charged with murder, with an enhancement of personal discharge of a firearm causing death.

Prosecutors said Edwards was angry that McDaniel conducted the fraud on his own and reaped all the profits. He is accused of recruiting Hoskins to help teach McDaniel a lesson.

At the urging of his girlfriend, who also helped create the tax fraud scheme, Edwards went with Hoskins to talk with McDaniel. Instead of talking, however, Hoskins and Edwards are accused of shooting McDaniel in the head and body multiple times that February afternoon about 2:30.

"At its core, this case is simple: The two defendants went to the victim's house and, with semi-automatic weapons, shot him dead," Foley said, as he flashed a picture of

McDaniel's bloody body laying in the middle of the street. "Not only did they commit

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searched during a traffic stop four months after the killing.

That friend, a felon now serving time in jail, is expected to testify that he was holding the gun for Edwards, Foley said.

Edwards' girlfriend is also expected to testify and tell of a conversation she had with Hoskins and Edwards about the killings. "She was appalled," Foley said.

Attorneys for Hoskins and Edwards declined to give an opening statement Monday but reserved their right to address the jury after the prosecutor is done presenting his case.

During a preliminary hearing earlier this year, the attorneys, Barbara Thomas, who represents Edwards, and Darryl Billups, who represents Hoskins, questioned the credibility of witnesses. Foley admitted Monday that two of them had been paid by Oakland police in the past for information.

The two defense attorneys also questioned the motives of Edwards' girlfriend and wondered why she had not also been implicated in the killing.

Foley told the jury Monday that the girlfriend never asked Edwards to kill McDaniel but only requested that he talk to the rapper about conducting the tax fraud on his own.

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